

WOMEN WANT ADVENTURE LARAPINTA HIKING TRIP



Trip highlights

- Experience the Larapinta Trail and sleep in a swag
- Explore stunning gorges, waterholes and spectacular landscapes
- Watch the sunrise atop Mount Sonder, Northern Territory's 4th highest peak
- End each day at a scenic campsite in the remote West MacDonnell Ranges
- Enjoy delicious camp side meals prepared by your guides
- Adventure with a group of like-minded women

Why join Women Want Adventure?

How can we make this trip as safe, connective, supportive and fun, for every woman as possible? That's what we ask ourselves each year as we tailor the Women's Larapinta Adventure. We pride ourselves in our commitment of providing professional guides, a high level of safety, delicious meals and a strong sense of group support and connection. After 5 years operating our women's only Larapinta Trips, we know this experience offers more than a 'holiday'. It's a quality experience to explore the incredible country with a fabulous group of women.

Duration	7 days, 6 nights
Grade	Moderate grading- uneven, rocky and hard underfoot terrain with elevations
Location	Alice Springs, NT
Activities	Hiking, outdoor swag camping
Accommodation	1 night – Earth Sanctuary camping astronomy experience
	4 nights – Swag camping
	1 night – Post accommodation Desert Palms Alice Springs
Total hiking distance	74km over 5 days
Group Size	13 women and 3 guides

Summary

Join us for five days on trail as we immerse ourselves in the beautiful and remote West MacDonnell Ranges on the Larapinta Trail. Hiking daily with impressive views, exploring canyons and deep valleys with deep cultural history. Swag camping at night, enjoying billions of stars on a back-to-basics Red Centre Australian adventure.



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Am I suitable for this trip?

Hiking the Larapinta Trail is a fantastic opportunity for women to deepen and nourish their relationships through a shared experience, with the land and each other. If you're ready to escape the hectic pace of day-to-day life and immerse yourself in a week of hiking and swag camping, this trip is for you.

Physical and mental preparation cannot be highlighted enough. Come open minded and ready for an experience different from a typical walking "holiday". You'll get a little dusty and as we like to say "a Red Centre Tan".

Getting back to basics creates an experience for a more intimate and connective adventure. This trip is not for the gun-ho who want to rush and speed through a day (you'll miss the rock wallabies). Instead, we soak in incredible landscape surroundings. Walking pace is slow yet steady, and some days are moderate to difficult, with inclines of up to 1380m on the last day at Mount Sonder (6.5-7 hours walking). This trip is suitable for women who are regular walkers and ready to be on their feet between 5-8 hours each day. Long distance walking should not be new to you and training is suggested so you get the most out of your experience.

Most of our campsites are in shared locations, however private in our own set up area away from others. They provide the backdrop for impressive stargazing opportunities as we relax and bond around the campfire by night with just our women's group.

Trip Summary

The Larapinta Trail is a long-distance hiking trail in The Northern Territory stretching 223km from East to West in the West MacDonnell Ranges. The Aboriginal Arrernte (pronounced arrunda) people are the traditional custodians of Alice Springs and the surrounding region.

Packed full of highlights, the Larapinta Trail includes mountain peaks, beautiful gorges, swag camping and the incredible sunrise hike at Rwtiepme (Mount Sonder), the fourth highest mountain in the Northern Territory at 1,380m.

The trip begins with a group welcome and astronomy experience at Earth Sanctuary. The first day hiking starts on Section 1, the official start point of the trail, covering the 790m at Euro Ridge with excellent views of the surrounding Alice Springs area. Days 2-5 cover sections 10, 11 and 12. You'll only need your day pack as our transport vehicle will meet you with additional sleeping, clothing and camp gear. This trip ends in sensational style for a pre-dawn, sunrise hike up Mount Sonder, surrounded by the starry night and shadow of the mountain and her dreamtime story. Your trip will conclude in Alice Springs at Dessert Palms accommodation and a group farewell dinner.

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What's included

- Pre hike swag camping and astronomy experience at Earth Sanctuary
- Camping equipment including swags
- All catering equipment
- First and last night beverage
- 5 days walking
- 6 dinners
- 5 breakfasts
- 5 lunches
- All delicious snacks on the trail
- Hotel airport drop off
- 4WD vehicle transportation while on trip
- All camping, traditional owner and national park fees
- Group first aid and emergency communication
- 1x night post accommodation at Desert Palms Alice Springs
- Farewell dinner in Alice Springs
- 3 Women Want Adventure professional guides
- Women Want Adventure Larapinta welcome present

What's not included

- Accommodation in Alice Springs before pick-up date/time
- Items of personal nature, such as laundry and alcoholic beverages not outlined in itinerary
- Sleeping bag and pillow
- Day backpacks
- Airfares
- Airport pick up
- Travel insurance
- Head torches and other personal equipment
- Face masks and hand sanitiser
- Fly face masks



At a glance

DAY 1	Pick up Aurora Hotel. Earth Sanctuary Experience and Camp
DAY 2	Telegraph Station to Wallaby Gap (14km)
DAY 3	Ormiston Gorge to Finke River (15km)
DAY 4	Finke River to Rocky Bar Gap (17km)
DAY 5	Rocky Bar Gap to Red Bank Gorge (12km)
DAY 6	Mt Sonder Sunrise Hike & Return to Alice Springs (16km)
DAY 7	Depart Alice Springs





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[Detailed itinerary](#)

DAY 1 – Arrive to Alice Springs - Earth Sanctuary Camp

Arrive at Alice Springs and make your own way to Aurora Hotel (11 Leichhardt Terrace, Alice Springs NT 0870) for pick up outside hotel at 3pm. It is essential you make your travel arrangements to enable you to arrive on time for group pick up. All gear can be packed onto the 4WD bus and items not needed while on your trip will be dropped off at our storage location on the way to Earth Sanctuary. It is a 30-minute drive to Earth Sanctuary.

Upon arrival, we'll roll out swags, set up camp and enjoy afternoon tea. As day turns to night, we savour the sun setting across the red centre before a star-studded sky. Earth Sanctuary will take the group through a tour of local knowledge of ecology, culture and astronomy to commence the trip. Information you'll be grateful to take with you when out on the trail and star gazing from your swag.

At night, enjoy a hearty meal prepared by your guides and the opportunity to get to know your fellow group members over a complimentary alcoholic beverage. This is a time your guides will take you through a group briefing so you're prepared for the following days.

The briefing will cover:

- Overview of the itinerary, sections of walking
- Cross-check of required gear and clothing you'll carry (day packs only)
- Camp set up and locations
- Outline of inherent risks of the trip and our emergency procedures
- Explanation Leave No Trace principles and cultural respect
- Forecast weather conditions and trail flags

Group briefings will be conducted after dinner nightly. Rest assured, you'll only need to think about the day hiking ahead and your guides will inform you on what's required for each day on the trail.

Earth Sanctuary Camp has showers and toilets. A unique place to call home for the night.

Meals: Afternoon Tea, Dinner and compliment beverage
Camp showers: Yes

Day 2 – Section 1 Telegraph Station to Wallaby Gap

We start the day with a camp breakfast and leave 7-7.30am for Section 1, where our Larapinta Hike begins. The morning is spent walking along undulating and open country, winding our way over creeks, gullies and small features. We'll stop for morning tea along the way, before the incline to top Euro Ridge, the most scenic section providing panorama views of MT Gillion (950m), the highest point on the Heavitree Range. In the afternoon we'll descend into Wallaby Gap, where we'll have lunch before driving 1.5hrs to Glen Helen Gorge, our next camp location. Glen Helen is a remote camp area. It has an open bar overlooking the gorge. Grab a drink or walk down to the gorge to dip your feet in the water.

Walking Distance: 14km | **Walking Time:** 5.5-6 hours

Meals: B,L,D

Elevation: 790m

Camp shower: Yes, public

Grade: Moderate





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Day 3 – Section 10, Ormiston Gorge to Finke River

After breakfast we continue Section 10 starting at Ormiston Gorge. This special place offers an immense variety of extraordinary scenery. This morning we'll venture on a small side trip into part of Ormiston Pound and up to the Ormiston lookout. You'll be amazed by towering red walls, local plants and wildlife. After the shorter side trip, we'll head west back on the Larapinta Trail toward Finke River. Keep an eye out for Wedge-tailed Eagles and a variety of Acacias.

By lunchtime we'll walk into camp, spending the afternoon kicking back with a hot drink taking in the fabulous views of the Finke River, and perhaps having another refreshing swim at our stunning campsite and warming up by an outdoor fire.

Walking Distance: 15km + side trips | **Walking Time:** 5.5-6 hours

Meals: B,L,D

Camp shower: Take a dip in the river

Grade: Moderate – difficult

Day 4 – Finke River to Rocky Bar Gap

Today is our furthest day hiking, covering long open and exposed stretches and 850m ascent for views of Mount Sonder from Hill Top Lookout. We'll have an early start, passing some 600-million-year-old natural arches in quartzite ridges standing out of the ground like crumbling walls. After lunch at Hill Top Lookout, we'll descend and wind down the hills and mulga woodlands before meeting the vehicle to take us to Red Bank Gorge Campsite for the night. Spend the evening around a warm campfire, toast marshmallows and watch the sun set.

Walking Distance: 17km | **Walking Time:** 8 hours

Meals: B,L,D

Elevation: 850m

Camp showers: n/a

Grade: Difficult

Day 5 – Rocky Bar Gap to Redbank Gorge

From Redbank Gorge camp we return to where we finished the previous days hiking at Rocky Bar Gap. We continue walking on the second half of Section 11 toward the base of Mount Sonder. Sections of today's walk are through flatter bushland and cleared areas with a variety of central Australian flora. We pass dry creeks and beautiful ghost gums which make excellent places to stop for morning tea. Mount Sonder's spectacular mountain peak unfolds besides you for the entirety of today's walk, an exciting anticipation for the following days dawn summit. Slow down today and enjoy the journey. We'll arrive back to camp at Redback Gorge for lunch and

the opportunity to explore the stunning gorge as an afternoon side trip.

Tonight, we pack our bags for an early start the following morning.

Walking Distance: 12km | **Walking Time:** 5 hours

Meals: B,L,D

Elevation: 90m

Grade: Moderate

Day 6 – Redbank Gorge – Summit Mount Sonder

Today is an early start (3am) as we wake before sunrise to summit Mount Sonder by the light of our head torches. The mountain is traditionally known as Rwetyepme. In local Indigenous Dreaming, she's a pregnant woman forever doomed to lay on her back and watch the sky - the mountain peaks resemble her in the legend, and your guides will share her story.

It's 6.5-7hr return hike, so bring hiking poles and enjoy being surrounded by deep and peaceful darkness for the pre-dawn walk. At the summit you'll have the opportunity to watch the sun peak over the red centre, sit in silence and soak in the beauty. A truly special and unique place to be. Bring your beanie and gloves as it can get very chilly up at the summit.

We descend to Redbank Gorge to enjoy a celebratory breakfast before we board the bus and transfer back to Alice Springs. Accommodation is at Dessert Palms. Jump in the pool and enjoy a hot shower before tonight's final group dinner in town.

Walking Distance: 16km | **Walking Time:** 6.5-7 hours

Meals: B,L, D

Elevation: 1,380m

Grade: Difficult

Accommodation: Twin share – Dessert Palms

Day 7 – Trip concludes

Your trip concludes at checkout at the hotel at 10am. Drop off airport arrangements are included, and we will take the group to Alice Springs airport at one selective time.

*Breakfast is not included. We suggest a walk (if you're legs are up for it) or 5-minute taxi into town to one of the great local cafes.





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Climate

During winter months, the climate in Central Australia offers cooler daytime temperatures averaging 15-26C. However, on the Larapinta Trail you can experience temperatures below zero degrees in the early mornings and at night, please ensure you refer to the packing list to ensure your trip is enjoyable and comfortable. The top of Mount Sonder can be very cold and windy, it's essential you have your wind/waterproof jacket.

Equipment required

A comprehensive packing list is provided in the predeparture information supplied on the booking page to download. Having operated this trip many times with women's groups, we have outlined all essential gear and additional tips. Please ensure you bring a warm sleeping bag (at least -5) and a pillow with a black sleeping cover (white gets dirty). It is not essential if you don't bring a sleeping bag. Many women end up rolling up clothing.

A day on the Larapinta Trail

Mornings start with the smell of fresh brewed coffee from your swag, before a nourishing breakfast. After breakfast we pack up camp and set off for the day hiking. Your guides will remind you of the distances and what to expect. We walk between 2-3 hours before stopping for morning tea and numerous breaks along the way. Lunch is provided either on the trail with premade lunches to carry with us. Sometimes we'll be able to walk into camp for lunch depending on the day's distance. Once we reach camp, roll out your swag, take off your boots and enjoy the magnificent surroundings with a hot cuppa and relax. Over a healthy dinner prepared by your guides, you'll reflect on the day's hiking and be briefed on the following day ahead.

Grading

Our moderate level trips will see you spending more time outdoors and moving that body of yours. From steep summit inclines up Mount Sonder to longer days on exposed trails, you can expect to be on your feet between 5-8 hours. A good level of health and fitness is required, and you should be comfortable to carry your day pack with 2-3L of water and personal items.

Fitness and Preparation

Physical exercise should not be new to you. We recommend participating in aerobic activity 2-3 times per week and incorporate some hills, stair climbs and longer walks between 10-16km prior to attending.

Your guides

Our guides are one of our biggest assets. We pride ourselves on the standard and quality of these great women who you will be supporting your Larapinta journey. Our team are enthusiastic, professional and qualified outdoor guides who love sharing this incredible country with you. Many women attending have often our team on prior trips, so we'll look forward to seeing you again. Our guides have a caring nature and attention to each individual to make sure your trip is safe, supportive and enjoyable.





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Meals during your trip

Women Want Adventure strives to provide wholesome and nutritious meals on every trip. Where and when we can, we cater for dietary requirements. Our guides have fabulous skills and good food is important to us.

The types of food you can expect on your trip include:

- Breakfast:** Cereals, toast, porridge, fruit
- Lunch:** Salad wraps, fresh salads and sandwiches, rice cakes
- Dinner:** Varies daily from curries, pasta's, stir fries, meat and vegetables
- Snacks:** There are always plenty of snacks such as muesli bars, fruit, nuts and seeds

Dietary requirements

We cater for most dietary requirements and food allergies, however not preferences. If you have dietary requirements, please indicate when making your booking. We do not cater for FODMAP on this trip. We can cater for plant based, vegetarian and gluten free. Please ensure when outlining if you're gluten free how specific your allergy is as we will buy additional food for you. Soy, almond and additional dairy free options for milks are also provided.

Pre and post tour accommodation

If flying in the day prior for pick up, we recommend staying at Aurora Hotel. This is your pickup location on day 1. The last night's accommodation is at Desert Palms – twin share.

What you carry

Day packs are required for hiking. All other items will be locked on the bus and transported to the next location daily. Additional items you may not need will be stored in our sheds before heading to Earth Sanctuary on Day 1. Your pack should include a waist and chest strap for comfort and large enough for 3L of water carrying capacity, along with warm clothing and food. We suggest a 25-30L pack with a bladder pocket.

Luggage

There is limited space in our 4WD transport vehicle. Please do not pack your items in a hard-shell suitcase, this is difficult to store on the bus. We suggest an overnight pack or large duffle bag.

Swag and accommodation on the trip

5 nights of the trip will be spent camping along the track at designated commercial, yet private campsite areas in swags. Your guides will instruct you on how to roll out and pack up a swag. At each campsite there is a compostable outdoor toilet, along with a portal toilet we set up for the group. Swags will be stored on the bus throughout the day and are not carried. Desert Palms is the last night accommodation in Alice Springs and twin share. Accommodation is limited for bookings and a single supplement (if available at the property) will require notice and the cost of an additional room. Please contact us to see if there is availability.





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Emergency and contact information

In the case of an emergency, or if family need to reach you when out of service, please contact operations manager Sara Cameron on **0424 393 752**. Our guides carry satellite phones.

For all other questions prior to your trip, contact us at womenwantadventure@outlook.com or call **0403 918 346**.

Connect with us

On the first night, your guides will help set up a shared Facebook Group between women attending. This is a fabulous way to stay connected and share memories and photos.

Connect with us on social media prior to your departure:

FACEBOOK: @womenwantadventure

INSTAGRAM: @womenwantadventure

Use hashtag **#womenwantadventure** to see yourself in action or share your favourite trail moments to be featured.

Contact

Email: womenwantadventure@outlook.com

Phone: 0403 918 346

